ronnie at the rest home

He's a quiet one.
Usually docilely cooing as the floor nurse
places a tray full of little dishes of
pudding and whipped beef in front of
him on the bed table
Or weaving cloth-strip mats worthy of an
autistic and used for nothing.
At the "dances" he sits in his wheelchair
Wearing the same vacantly paternal grin
that once ruled the world.
Not many visitors, especially since his wife
remarried.
Quiet.
But sometimes when the nurse comes in to
change his bedpan
A spark alights in his eye;
Summoning all his B-movie idol strength
He asks, "Did we drop the bombs, Mommy?
Did we win?"
She boredly says yes to shut him up.
Satisfied, he leans back and dreams.
Dashing young halfbacks collide with evil
empires, ice cream sundaes and cattle
drives and Air Force One;
Ronnie goes to sleep happy.

--Jason Useless

dumbass hallway

I hear a voice behind me.
It's that one guy I hate
Walking with some idiotic friend of his.
I can almost make out their lunkheaded
conversation.
NO! My step quickens, I turn a corner;
They follow!!
I don't want to hear their stupid burly sun-
bleached landlocked-surfer voices
discussing whatever matter of beer/
pussy/Pearl Jam/Stüssy their substego-
saurian minds are currently fixated on!
Please! Spare me!!
Sweat breaks on my brow,
I'm almost racing, now through hallway, now
through downstairs;
Still they persist!!
Hovering a few feet behind like an unholy
mating of Keanu Reeves and Pepe Le-
Pew!!
I don't want to be able to hate you
Resplendently mindless in your Raiders hat
and flannel shirt thrown open to reveal
a femo-bead necklace;
But what the fuck, man!!
You leave me no choice!!!

--Jason Useless

YOU CAN'T WAVE a magic wand and automatically become a great clown.

Do-It-Yourself with . . .
Dr. Fix-It

Being the wacky iconoclasts that punk rockers are, our musical medium of choice is generally vinyl -- the same medium now generally nonexistent in the mainstream music world. Naturally, this makes for some problems when it comes to things like fixing turntables. Unless you're willing to shell out big bucks to have your record player fixed by a specialist, or even bigger bucks to buy a hard-to-find new one, innovation and inventiveness are your only options.

That's why Dr. Fix-It is glad to bring you news of a daring new method of repairing decrepit old turntables. It may sound crazy at first, but it could just save your records from obsolescence one day. This new technique can be summed up in one simple phrase: if you have a problem, lick it. And I don't mean this figuratively.

Simply remove the part that's causing all the trouble, lubricate it thoroughly with your tongue, then replace it and twist the night away. One friend I know was having problems with the actual turning mechanism on his player; he removed the motor belt, ran it through his mouth a few times, and put it back in place. This was followed by an incredible *two years* of trouble-free service. Another friend ran into the age-old problem of the malfunctioning needle (especially vexing now that needles are so hard to find and expensive); after just a few minutes of tongue treatment, it worked like a charm.

There are limitations, of course. Dr. Fix-It expressly warns against using this technique when dealing with any sort of electrical problems (and, incidentally, takes no responsibility for any damages incurred by doing so). In addition, attempts at applying the licking method to broken cassette and CD players indicates that this technique is not adaptable to magnetic or digital technology.

Still, tough times demand tough solutions, so the next time your record player gives you trouble, why not lick it? Because what the hell else are you gonna do, buy a new one?

A Nice Story

by Steve

On a Saturday in the early summer of 1992 I went caving in Illinois with my friend Luke, his childhood friend Joe, and two of Joe's friends. I had already been spelunking several times since that spring, and had grown accustomed to drives on gravel backroads in friend's cars, following semi-legible directions. I always eagerly anticipated the first echoing steps into the coolness of the caves, a relief after the hot, buggy, summer above. Even more pleasant was the ascension to the warm surface again hours later, clothing waterlogged and smeared with mud, a feeling not unlike the relief of leaving an excessively air-conditioned movie theater on a hot day. This particular afternoon in the third week of June, my trip would evoke somewhat different feelings

Luke had asked me a few weeks before if I would like to go caving with him and his old friend Joe. Joe had been his neighbor and friend as a kid, despite being six years Luke's senior. They lived in a neighborhood bordering on industrial parks, factories, and railroad tracks. Joe had explored the area thoroughly, and often took Luke on trips into sewers, abandoned buildings, and empty factories. After growing up and moving away, Joe, unlike Luke, continued in his pursuit of the adventurous, and still sometimes invited him along on excursions. He joined the National Guard, took up SCUBA diving, learned the basics of rock climbing and rappelling, and became an avid spelunker. His caving exploits were many, and included being arrested for entering caves on private property.

The cave he had invited Luke and I along to was rougher than I was used to, but no challenge for him, with no great waterfalls or suffocating tunnels to be wriggled through like moles. A few weeks before, I had explored Little Mammoth cave, also known as Illinois Caverns, which was only a few miles distant. The caves were in an area of rolling hills and patchy farmland, spotted with occasional sinkholes, some of which contained the mouths of caves. This cave was similar to Little Mammoth: a main passage five miles long with a stream of fifty degree water running its length, and a few dead-end side passages.

Near Little Mammoth's entrance was a trailer occupied by Mr. Armand Krueger, a filthy, grizzled, gnarled man of advanced years. He acted as caretaker of the cave, Joe knew him. He had personally mapped and explored every cave in the area, in which he had lived his entire life. He owned land nearby, under which was a cave comparable in size to Little Mammoth, but with enough low ceilings and waist-deep pools of frigid water to deter most tourist families. It was there that we were headed.

On the morning of the trip, Luke and I awoke early and met Joe at his house. There we met his cousin Burt, a bearded man in his late twenties, whose "Born to Kill" t-shirt, complete with crossed M-16 assault rifles and a grinning skull, was made laughable by his easygoing manner. Their friend Kevin, from the National Guard, was also there, a cheerfully slow-witted fellow built like a professional football player. After introductions, we piled into Joe's tan Cherokee. I tried to nap once we got on the highway, but Joe kept barking at me to wake up, to my weary amusement. Through the hour long trip, he and his friends kept up a steady stream of upbeat chatter, veering from Kevin's locker-room banality to Joe's pointed sarcasm. We arrived at Little Mammoth before noon, and met Mr. Krueger to get the map of his cave. After another drive of twenty minutes, we arrived at our destination.

Joe parked the Cherokee at the end of the gravel road near two trails that led into the woods. We dug out flashlights, and jackets to keep us warm in the cave. I donned a denim jacket of Luke's, still filthy from our last caving trip, and a helmet, which prompted an array of jokes about my masculinity from Joe and his older friends. We started down the path into the light forest.

After walking for a few minutes, already sweating profusely due to my jeans and coat, I saw the edge of a sinkhole ahead. I was in the lead, and I approached the edge. The depression was about sixty feet across, and roughly circular. The opposite side, covered in ferns and lichened boulders, sloped sharply to a rocky floor twenty feet below. I walked to the edge, standing on mossy rock, and saw that the side we were on dropped straight down, and then cut under and out of sight to what I presumed was the cave's mouth. Behind me, I heard Burt say, "Holy shit. It's a baby deer," in a awed tone. I turned to see them with their backs to me, a few feet to my right, huddled together, craning their necks. There were

murmurs of puzzlement. "Why isn't it moving?" Kevin asked. I leaned around them and saw the deer, tan with white spots, motionless, nearly invisible in the dappled sunlight. "Maybe something's wrong with it," somebody said. We stood in a semicircle around it. Burt reached for it with the butt of his red plastic work flashlight. Joe said, "Don't touch it!" just before Burt connected. The deer sprang up. Then I remembered that baby deer freeze when in danger, and rely on their camouflage for protection. It bounded once, away and to the right. It then zigzagged, and leaped off the edge of the cliff and into space. For an instant, nobody moved. Then we heard the meaty impact below us. "Oh shit," Joe moaned. I remember laughing a couple of times, mirthlessly. I couldn't believe that the animal would jump off a cliff. We looked over the edge and saw the deer sprawled on the rocks below, thrashing weakly. Joe and Kevin, and then Burt and Luke, darted off around the sinkhole, and descended the slope on the other side. I followed. The deer made a noises like a human infant. Joe was furiously accusing Burt. "Why the hell did you touch it? I told you not to! You shouldn't have fuckin' touched it!" Burt's voice was shaky. He weakly defended himself, and tried to joke. "I been deer hunting twenty times, never got a thing. The one time I kill a deer, it's an accident," he said. I felt sorry for him. The deer didn't make any more of those noises, which was a good thing.

We got to the deer, and stood around it, asking each other what to do. Joe and I crouched to examine it. The air down there, near the cave mouth, was very cool. The deer was not obviously injured, not bleeding or contorted, but it couldn't stand up or raise its head. Somebody suggested we just leave it, and maybe it would be okay. Someone else suggested we take it to somebody. I lifted its head, but it couldn't hold it up. Someone suggested that we just kill it. I was glad somebody said it, because I felt guilty that it had crossed my mind. Joe said no. "Are we gonna smash its head with a rock?" he said. We all knew none of us could do that. Joe suggested that we take it to the ranger station at Little Mammoth. I took off Luke's denim jacket and laid it on the ground, and Joe and I lay the deer on it. It still struggled weakly as I picked it up against my chest. We headed back for the truck. Joe was still fuming. Burt looked sick.

Once back in the Cherokee, I sat in the middle seat with the deer on my lap, where it lay still. I laid its head on my arm. Joe, who had driven too fast on the one lane dirt roads on the way here, was frighteningly reckless on the way to the ranger station. He drove over hills at fifty miles an hour, oblivious to the possibility of oncoming traffic just out of sight. Nobody talked. Periodically, I tried to tell if the deer was still breathing, but the bumpiness of the roads made it impossible. Despite Joe's driving, time crawled by at a snail's pace. From where I sat I could see Joe, our brave leader, in the rearview mirror, and he looked as if he was about to cry. From time to time, he rubbed his eyes. I desperately hoped that he wouldn't cry.

We arrived at the ranger station, in sight of old Mr. Krueger's trailer. Joe got out and brought over the park ranger, a muscular, friendly young man. Joe did most of the talking, relating the story while I sat with the deer on my lap. He said he'd examine it. I gently handed it to him. He lay it on the ground on out of my sight. He stood and came over to the sliding door. "No good. It's dead," he said with some regret. If anybody was surprised, they didn't show it. Joe said we could take it back with us and throw it in the woods. The ranger said no, because he had to make an official report of any animal killed in the area, and dispose of it himself. He carried it around behind the building as we left.

We drove back to the cave, and went in as we'd planned. We entered and found that just inside, the ceiling dipped so low that it met the two feet of chilly, standing water there. We hunted for an exit and found none, and then walked back past the truck to the other path. It led to a similar, shallower sinkhole. That was the real entrance to Krueger's cave. Exploring it was fun, because it was, after all, what we'd come for. But there was a sense of stupid futility to our effort to explore the cave. I couldn't escape the feeling that we humans were clumsy brutes, destroying things of real value and beauty just by being in the wrong place at the wrong moment. Not always with bulldozers or harpoons or factory farms, but sometimes just by being curious, and not thinking fast enough.

Georges -

I am writing this letter concerning your column about straight-edge in TIRC #5. My name is Ben Scholle. I am eighteen years old and part of the straight-edge hardcore scene that you criticized. I will not attempt to disagree with some of your points, but in reading your column, I was disappointed by the way you went about your criticism.

Your stereotyping of all straight-edgers as self-righteous, insincere, moshin', 14-year-olds is understandable – not correct, but understandable. When I was in high-school and was unfamiliar with punk and hardcore, I thought that "punk" meant one of those Sid Vicious clones that came to school stoned everyday and whose vocabulary consisted only of the words "Fuck You." Since then, I have learned that the majority of punks care about thinking and changing things more than they care about purposeless "rebellion." I will not deny that there are far too many moshin' 14-year-olds in straight-edge, however, that is not all we are.

When I think of what straight-edge is to me, I think of all of the people I know across the country who are concerned with self-improvement – not self-righteousness. These are the people who are actually involved with the scene rather than the ones who go to shows to hang out or beat on people in a pit. Just like the 14-16 year old punks, the 14-16 year old straight-edgers often grow up to be contributing, sincere members of the scene.

Really, the things you criticize in straight-edge are also present in punk. What percentage of early punk rockers do you think actually understand the lyrics of their first punk record? Are there no punk kids who are from the suburbs and couldn't care less about changing anything? You mentioned the "uniform" of straight-edge (hooded sweatshirt, size 40 cut-off pants, wallet chain, etc.); I don't like the fashion aspect of hardcore at all. Personally, I dress pretty much the same way I always have. It's true that people will latch on to something and feel the need to turn it into a fashion. Some of these people also care about the rest of the movement, and some are interested only in the latest trend. My question to you is can you possibly accuse straight-edge of being fashion oriented and deny that there is also punk fashion?

There are countless aspects of straight-edge that I would like to change. I agree that the things you criticize are bad. I too criticize the lack of substance (no pun intended) and meaning in so much of the straight-edge scene. The difference between our criticisms is that I try to be constructive, while you, as it said at the top of your column, are merely "cold joanin'."

If I lived in south-central Los Angeles, and I hated gangs, I don't think I would advocate bombing the entire area. I know that there are problems in straight-edge, but I also see potential. Believe it or not, at the core of the scene, there are actually a lot of people who care about improving themselves and the world around them. Of course, there will always be those who cling on to the fringe of the scene and make it into fashion or a trend. Some of those will not stay with the scene for very long, and some will later realize what straight-edge is – and always has been -- truly about.

I have referred to straight-edge and punk as separate scenes in this letter. The reason is to show how alike they are. Whether you like it or not, straight-edge is still a part of punk. If you look at the center of straight-edge, you will still find the do-it-yourself methods of communication that define punk -- no matter what flaws may surround it. Please do not condemn straight-edge; instead, help us to correct it.

Thank you,

Ben Scholle / 34 Hannum Drive / Apt. 1D / Ardmore, PA / 19003

Ben,

I never advocated (as you say) the elimination of SxE as a whole. I think SxE can be a very positive force for change in the underground music scene. I just think that people put way too much emphasis on the drugs/morality aspect of SxE and forget of focus on trying to change society's problems. This doesn't include everyone, granted, but a huge proportion of SxE-ers fall into this category, being much more interested in the fashion/music/ "I'm-cooler-than-you-cos-I-don't-do-drugs" aspect of the scene.

Also, I completely agree that there is a punk fashion that many people get caught up in. I attack people in punk for it, too. It just seems much more prevalent among SxE-ers to get caught up in fashion and moshing than punks, and then, at 18, reject SxE as a stupid kid thing and start smoking, drinking beer, and watching football on TV.

And, yes, SxE is a part of punk, but I think it would be much more productive if SxE-ers didn't give up the underground at 18.

Any disses I direct towards SxE also apply to some punks, I'll agree. My experiences, though, indicate that it is much more common in SxE in particular than in punk in general. My view of people rejecting SxE includes people who "find God" or Krsna or whatever else, also. To me, buying into a religion is buying into the system. Call me a cynic.

One last thing: I think that "cold joanin'" at least leads to positive changes. One has to recognize that there is a problem with something before that problem can be corrected. I'm more than happy to help correct problems I see with anything, but they have to be pointed out as problems before that can be done.

– Georges

8Bark

On April 17th 8Bark blew back into town from the Windy City, to wow a packed house at Bastille's. After a bit of near-deadly confusion around highways 40 & 270, we made it to the Steak 'N' Shake on Hampton. There the Haymarket Interview Vegan (HIV) posse cornered Victoria and Brian and questioned them over fries in the cramped and ketchup-stained booths. They are scheduled to play Cummels on July 11th, so be there.

V--Victoria Dakarian
B--Brian Kozlovsky
T--Ted Ortmann
S--Steve Claverie

S--Okay, 8Bark. . .what's with the name anyway?
B--Doesn't mean anything.
S--Doesn't mean anything?
B--It's just a name.
T--Who came up with it?
B--Doug did, actually.
(here steve asks for introductions)
B--I'm Brian Cozlovsky, I play drums, and I do backup vocals, too.
V--I'm Victoria I sing and I play percussion.
B--Doug Ward plays guitar, and he does vocals. And Steve Sackett plays bass and does backup vocals.
S--All righty. Now, you're on tour, right?
B--Kinda. It's just like. . .a four day thing. We just played Little Rock and Carbondale, and tomorrow we're playing Nashville.
(then somebody, maybe Josh of the Meat Sisters, told Brian: "Tell them about how you don't play in Chicago much."
B--We don't play in Chicago much.
S--Why is that?
B--I don't know. . .we like playing out of town better.
S--Do you have a big following in Chicago, or--
B--Not really. It's pretty small. The Chicago scene is more like, the Naked Raygun-Pegboy-thing. Everyone's into that. And like, I don't know. Whatever.
S--I see. It seems like a lot more people in St. Louis knew you this time around. They were more hyped to see you than they were last time.
B--We looked at our mailing list and we sent out postcards this time, and also, we just played. . .not too long ago. A couple months ago.
S--November. . .twenty. . .something.
(Ted joined in here, and proceeded in a ham-fisted interrogation of Victoria about 'her scarab necklace.)
V--Ask us some interesting questions. (ouch)
B--Yeah, like personal questions that'll piss us off.

V--Really, really weird ones.
T--Do you encounter any prejudice, maybe not blatant, but subtle. . .about being a woman and being in the scene? Do you ever feel excluded, possibly?
V--Sometimes. Yeah. We played in Danville, Illinois.
B--It was weird.
V--And this one band came, and there was a big fight about who was gonna play first, and who was gonna play second and third. . .So anyways, this guy was in this band and he was talking to me and he goes, "Well, what do you know, you're just the roadie."
T--No way.
V--Yeah, he thought I was the roadie.
B--Or someone's girlfriend.
T--And he was in one of the bands? Man, what a sexist rockstar pig.

B--Those guys were dorks, though.
T--Well, Danville, Illinois--you've gotta be careful of those towns named after guys.
V--Manville.
S--"Ville".
B--You've gotta be suspicious.
T--Weirdsville.
S--You're weirdsville, Ted.

T--This is true. So whaddya you think of Steak 'N' Shake?
B--Sucks.
S--Do they have S.N.S. in Chicago?
B--No.
V--The portions are really small.
S--Okay, other substantial questions. . .
V--Ask us weird questions now.
B--Let us ask you questions.
T--All right.
B--What's with your hair? Is that dyed?
S--Yeah. I bleached it.
T--How long has it been since you washed it?
B--Ever seen a grown man naked?
S--Yeah!!
T--Do you like it when a dog rubs up against your leg. . .
S--Ever seen a gladiator movie?
V--Yeah, I love em. Did you ever see that movie *Caligula*?
T--I've heard much about it, but I've never seen it.
S--How about *Blazing Saddles*? Now that's a funny movie.
B--I saw that.
V--I didn't see it. I hate movies.
S--Not Mel Brooks' movies. . .
T--Not Mel Brooks' movies!
V--I don't like hollywood movies.
S--If you were to have to liken 8Bark to a single Mel Brooks movie, what movie would it be? And why?
T--We're assuming that you've seen all of them.
B--I dunno, probably *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. That's a Mel Brooks movie, isn't it? He's in it.
T--Who cares. That counts.
B--I don't know why I thought of that one. Probably cause I couldn't think of any other movie.

T--Because your music's mad, mad, mad, mad.
S--It's a mad, mad, mad, mad band.
(We ask how long they've been together.)
B--We started the band like, January of '89 maybe. It's been about three and a half years.
T--So when did you come along, Victoria?
B--She came along about a year and a half ago.
T--How'd you get in the band?
V--Okay, I was at a party, and Doug was there, and he said,"Hey, do you know anyone that would wanna sing in a band? Or do you?" And I'm like "Yeah, I will." The next day he called me and stuff.

B--It totally worked out. She was never in a band before--never sang in her life.
V--I couldn't play drums or anything like that.
T--Did you ever listen to hardcore or punk or stuff like that before?
V--Yeah, I did, but I didn't go to a lot of shows. The only punk shows I had gone to when I was younger were Suicidal Tendencies--stuff like that. Corporate punk. I didn't go to any little shows unless they were friends of mine.
T--Do you all live kind of close to each other? Is practicing hard?
B--It's pretty easy. She lives the farthest away. About a 30 minute drive. It's not bad. And I can walk to Doug's place--like, where we practice in 15 minutes.
T--I don't know your lyrics by heart, but from what I've read they seemed personal. I didn't really get a strong political feel from them. What are they are about in general? Who writes them anyway?
B--Me and Doug wrote a lot of them. Doug writes the most of them. A lot of them are like...weird word games that make you think. There's not too many that are political just because every band does that. Almost every band that's in the punk scene does that. And if they don't then, you know--
T--They're not punk.
B--So we just kind of try to avoid that.
S--Straight political stuff you mean?
B--Yeah, no matter what you're playing--stenchcore, melodic, whatever kind of music it is, when the lyrics start getting like, "Fuck the Government--They're all assholes!" You've heard it so many times over it's not cool anymore.
V--It's not supposed to be cool.
B--Right, but--
T--Do you think it's become cliched?
B--Yeah, definitely.
V--For some bands, yeah, but there are still some bands that are political that I like.
T--I would tend to agree with Victoria.
V--I don't think everybody decides, "Wow, let's be political."
B--Yeah, I don't think so either.
V--You can see right through it if they--
B--If it happens, it happens.
T--All of the political bands aren't anarchy bands.

B--There's like Spitboy and stuff--they're not anarchists.
T--But along the same line, your lyrics to an extent are political.
V--Yeah, they are.
T--They address social issues.
B--But it's more like day to day real decisions that you have to make, and the political aspects of that--not big stuff like, "The world is fucked, and so are you."
(Ted hurls laughter across the restaurant like somebody just let the Pacific in the front door. The conversation proceeds to get pulled under and go downstream. So to speak. Victoria and Brian talk about their disillusionment with college, and Ted describes his goals of wealth and prestige.)
S--Okay. If there was an official boardgame for 8Bark. . . .if Parker

Brothers called you up--
8Bark--Scrabble!!
S--Would you do a commercial for Scrabble?
T--Would you write a song about Scrabble?
V--A DIY commercial (laughs).

B--I'd do a commercial for Chutes and Ladders if I could be one of those weird characters that walks around on the board. That's it.
T--That would be hot.
(Brian tells us about a friend from Underdog who works at Midway (creators of Pac-Man), who's going to digitize 8Bark and their music for the game. Ted asks about 8Bark's policy regarding hanky-panky on the road.)
B--No, that's completely illegal. Rule #1: No lovin' in the van. Rule #2: No love interest *between* the band.
V--What do you mean, no lovin' in the van? I broke that rule and nobody said anything to me.
B--No love interest in the van means. . .your girlfriend can't go on tour with us.
V--Yeah. If you meet, like, a hot guy or girl at a show--
T--Even if there's noone else in the van?
V--No. You can't bring you're girlfriend or boyfriend or love interest into the van *with the band*, cause it'll weaken our bond. That's why we do it.

B--It's like taking an atom out of Uranium 235 and expecting it to power your generator. It doesn't work.
V--The band just won't work the same if there's another entity inside the van.
T--So this is kind of like, a pre-nuptial band agreement?
B--Yep.
T--Crazy.
V--We all agree to it. It's not a problem.
(Ted grills Victoria about her percussion instruments, which leads into Steve boasting of the good pickin's in the dumpsters behind his house--"It's like having Goodwill in your backyard." 8Bark's crossdressing friends come up, as does the Collective Chaos house, and Profane E's weapon's showcase issue.)
T--Does anybody have any questions?
S--I do. Okay, what would be your weapons of choice, in a possible revolution.
T--In the next holocaust.
B--I think it would be, like, plate tectonic-moving technologies. You could just shift continents at will.
T--What about you Victoria?
V--I don't like weapons.
T--There we go! That's the proper response.
B--She's a hippie.
V--I am *not*. I'm not a hippie.
S--Tree hugger.
T--Hey what's wrong with that?
V--Tofu-muncher. . .
B--Sandal-wearin, bead-suckin--
T--Bug-lovin--
B--Truck-drivin--
V--Commie-pinko--
B--LSD-takin hippie.

T--Does anyone do drugs in the band?
B--Sometimes.
T--Okay. I won't ask any further questions.
V--We already have a really bad reputation for that. From the 8Bark tour diary.
B--Aw, that's just in Chicago. (He explains. A guy toured with them and spent the whole time stoned. Or something.)
V--We're not on drugs now. We didn't smoke any pot today. We didn't take any mushrooms or smoke any crack or shoot up heroin before the show.
T--Why not?
V--We couldn't get our hands on anything.
T--Now kids, were not condoning the use of drugs.
B--I think some drugs can be cool. Can be positive. (Ted spouts off about NORML, and how pot should be legal.)
V--I take pot for ceremonial purposes.
T&S--What type of ceremonies?
B--Gettin' *stoned*!!
S--Sounds like a good ceremony to me!
V--This interview is getting really dumb. . . . Aren't you going to ask me what nationality I am?
T--What nationality are you? To be anthropocentric. Cause you know, white Anglo-Saxons are the best. I just want to know what you are so I can degrade you.
V--(merrily) Okay! Iiiiiii'm Filipino, aaaaaaand Armenian.

T--(tragically confused) Armenian? Seriously? Wow.
(Here Doug interjects,"I'm a bike, I'm a buffalo, I'm a truck.")
V--(to Ted) What animal are you? He (Brian) is some kind of rodent.
T--I'm a Koala cause all I eat is eucalyptus leaves.
V--(to Steve) What are you?
S--Uhhhhm, what's a skinny. . .dorky animal?
T--A Steve Claverie!
V--(to Brian) You're a ferret!
T--You are a ferret!
V--I don't know. What do I look like? Probably a (either a cat or a cow. We can't tell. Doug again blunders into the conversation.)
V--What are you?
T--He said he's a bicycle.
V--"I am a skateboard. . ."(to the tune of "Wasted" by Black Flag.)
T--I am emperor Ronald Reagan.
S--(authoritatively) Now kids, lets not just quote other bands lyrics for the interview.
T--As a matter of fact, let's start doing that. Everybody quote lyrics now! (Nobody does. Ha ha on you, Ted. The interview, now crippled, crawls to a whimpering halt.)
Contact 8Bark care of Underdog Records, PO Box 14182, Chicago, IL, 60614. (See the reviews).

Please help Santa and
St. Louis Police Academy Recruit Class #93-3
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steady diet of ego

....You can't be what you were...hmm, weems quite ironic that these lyrics seem to take on an almost prophetic nature when applied directly to the actions of their creator. This conclusion comes from my observations at the Wednesday, August 25th Fugazi concert, where it seemed that both on-stage and off, people were oblivious to the fact that what was going on more closely resembled kindergarten follow-the-leader than a "punk" show.

Let me first say that as far as bands go, Fugazi has for the most part it seems, done a respectable job of sticking with their basic ideals (i.e. $5 covers and no t-shirts, home videos, toothbrushes, etc.) which is impressive in the fact that other punk bands which have ridden the same bus to "fame" haven't (i.e. Bad Religion). However, maybe it's more a question of time-will-tell. I couldn't have said the same thing three years ago, the thought wouldn't have even entered my mind when I watched them play as The Alley for a crowd that seemed half the size on a stage that was definitely half the size. And this isn't one of those"it-was-so-much-cooler-then-and-if-you-weren't-there-then-you don't-belong-here-now" tirades which, in my opinion, seem pretty self-defeating; but I think the difference was that, then, it seemed everyone was there to see the band Fugazi. This time, it seemed a lot of people were there to see Ian McKaye with Fugazi (you know, on back-up instruments), but not just to see him- to somehow win his respect. And he, in turn, seemed to know this, but not just know this- indulge in this.

For example- the use of the word "sir." Yes, at first seems like a petty thing, which it was- at first; the problem is, he addressed everyone from the bouncers, to "someone in charge" to the audience members as "sir" repeatedly. Now think about it- just when the hell do you call someone "sir"? Dwelling on my previous experience, I'd have to say not often- more specifically, only in times when someone commands my utmost respect (or, I guess, intimidates the shit out of me). But anyway- put it this way- if you were to approach Ian after the show, or bump into him somewhere, or write him a letter- would you address him as "sir"? I thought one of the points of punk rock and DIY was that everyone was on the same level doing everything they could themselves, eliminating all the corporate bull shit, including kiss-ass approaches to people like using sir. And I don't think Ian meant any undue respect to these people, so I think the whole thing sounded incredibly condescending, which I think was his intention as far as the bouncers go, but to be condescending to your audience is pretty indignant. And throughout the night it seemed a lot of his statements were dripping with condescension which slid right past the majority of the audience.

My other major observation had more to do with the audience itself, but Ian seemed an unreluctant instigator. Fugazi was about half-way through their set when the presence of a hopeful stage-diver in the audience captured Ian's attention. The guy wanted to stage dive, but apparently Ian wasn't too hip with the notion- "It doesn't have anything to do with the music anymore," he informed us (oh, excuse me, I didn't realize the rhythmical process of stage-diving was a highly-patterned and developed art form which was performed only in sync or in conjunction with music; stupid me for simplifying it to five seconds of "on-stage glory" and an adrenalin rush). Anyway, though Ian had voiced his disapproval of stage-diving, he was going to let the audience decide, "because this is a democracy." Well of course three-fourths of the crowd clapped against the guy diving, and his pleas were silenced with an off-hand sneering comment. The irony is, half of those people who voiced thier discontent at the crazy notion are the very same people who, at every other show, a casual onlooker would mistake for a band member because the're up on stage so much, waiting in line to jump off and scramble up again . And I'm sure secretly they were hoping no one would remember their bragging stories of days past, or know how many nothches they carved into their bedposts after all those shows spent airborne, because what if Ian found out? It was just sad to see how many people in that crowd were blindly controlled by and agreed to everything Ian said (regardless of previous opinions), and how he seemed to realize and manipulate this control. Maybe those audience memebers need to go back and listen to some Fugazi and concentrate a little harder on exactly what the lyrics are saying; maybe Ian does too, because then maybe the irony which pervaded the whole night will become clear. And in the words of an artist who actually lived by his words, "Do not become the slave of your model."

Courtesy of the Tomorrow

by Lauren Hancock

HUASIPUNGO

Huasipungo played at the Wabash Triangle Cafe in August '93, on their U.S. tour with Los Crudos (who didn't come here with them). The Wabash, aside from the presence of a stage and a bar, is much like a really big living room, and most of the crowd was slumped in easy chairs while the band played, which struck them as really odd. After the show, I interviewed them in the parking lot, in my characteristic half-assed, what-the-hell-am-I-doing style.

E--Esnieder, "Sugar Daddy", vocals
A--Amanda Jo Trevins, guitar
S--Steve Joseph Dore, Jr. aka Dr. Righteous, aka Sir Hotpants, drums
M--Mike Saboo, aka MC Dr. Methane, the Phart Physician, bass
Me--Steve, of this very zine!

(as you read this, imagine about four lines of fucking around and sillyness for each line of actual interview)

Me--So, "House of Pungo". What kind of silly name is that?
M--That's the all-Irish rap band.
S--We're an all-Colombian baskeball team.
E--Huasipungo comes from a book, by George Casa, and it's translated into English. Go get it and read it.
A--Huasipungo translates to "little plot of land" in Quechua. . .
M--The book is about Native Americans in South America who are basically kept as slaves by U.S. backed landowners, and how they're exploited and how they fight back. It's a really good book.
A--They all get killed at the end. .
M--. . .but their spirit lives on. Depressing but inspiring.
S--Huasipungo, to me, means "Devil's Sweat."
Me--How has the band changed since the original lineup, and what effect has that had on the music?
A--We've gotten much better! Much better. Tighter.
M--Musically, it's almost a completely different band, for better or worse. Since he's (Esnieder) pretty much written all the lyrics since the start of the band, the whole point of it has pretty much stayed the same.
E--The spirit of the band remains the same. The spirit of do-it-yourself, playing all ages, and that sort of thing. Unfortunately, the old band members had to move away, for whatever reason. Our guitar player had to leave because of a very sadistic practice of the immigration system in this country, which tries to keep people out any way they can. The person he shared his life with and his son were not given permission to enter this country, and he was. He basically missed the first year of his growing up, and he had to leave. It's all on good terms.
A--Screwed up priorities. The band's more important.
(Amanda tells an amazing story about driving through a horrific storm on I-70, hydroplaning into the median wall, smashing the hell out of the median and not putting so much as a scratch on the van, "Red Thunder".)

Me--(about the lyrics) Is it about fifty-fifty Spanish-English?
E--It used to be fifty-fifty, maybe it used to be sixty-forty, Spanish-English. Now it's seventy-five-twenty-five. I write however I feel like doing it. I feel more comfortable doing it in Spanish, of course. . .
Me--I would assume most people you play for don't speak Spanish. How do they usually react to needing to read lyric sheets?
E--Anywhere from. . .most of the time it's been good. Most of the people who don't care to read translations are people who don't really care about bands, period. They just go to a show to get drunk, or mosh or whatever and go home. They couldn't care less who it is, whether it's us, or Fugazi, or whoever. . .for the most it's been good. Of course, there was the letter in MaximumRock'n'Roll where they say, "I don't wanna read a stupid fucking lyric sheet in a smoky club, blah blah blah." Besides the Nazis we had in Staten Island, these Nazi skinheads who seig-heiled at us, and were screaming at me, "you fucking mexican, go back to your country, blah blah blah,". . .I know where those people stand. I know they had swastikas, I know what their intention is toward me and any other band members. Mike was the damn fag, Amanda was the damn bitch, our old drummer who was Japanese, was the damn chink, and so on. Other than that, it's been pretty cool.
M--If you were gonna react to a band, or actually read lyrics, usually having to read a translation doesn't dissuade them. If they're going to make that amount of effort to actually give a shit about a band. . . most people just sorta sit there and stare at us.
Me--So, they're either too apathetic to care, altogether. . .
E--Or really into it.
M--There is a middle ground, it's not that cut-and-dry.
A--I think it's probably the same reaction they'll have to other bands, because most hardcore bands . .you can't understand the lyrics while they're singing them anyway. So it takes an explanation either before the song or reading the lyrics. And Esnider, as we all know, explains. . .talks a lot in between songs, sometimes.
E--It's important to us to express what we think, or what I think. . .the issues we try to express, musically and lyrically, like what my experiences have been, and the experiences of people I know, which are totally different from the traditional, you know, "We are a punk band that sings about smashing

the "state" kind of thing. You know, I see people being deported, I come from a country where police repression is a very much everyday fact where people get shot, and death squads work towards shutting people up, like permanantly, and where the United States finances armies. . .a repressive system. It's a reality. I have family there. I lived there for 17 years, went to high school, so it gives me a different perspective. And we all learn from each other, and that's what it's all about.

Me--What do all of you think of the trend of bands from non-English speaking countries to actually sing their songs in English, and the tendency for American bands never to translate thier lyrics into other languages?

A--I talked to a friend from Belgium, he's French, and he's the singer for two bands, and he was telling me he sung stuff in English, and he was saying that English is a singable language, and Spanish is a singable language. He was saying French sounds dumb, sung, and that's the reason he sings in English. It's not important. Whatever people can understand, not to just be like, "okay, I was born knowing this language", because he does know other languages, that to him sound better, and I guess there are more English speaking countries than French. . .

M--It's also the trend of punk bands in other countries to want to be exactly like American bands. Most bands that start feeling they have to sing in English also pretty much try to duplicate American bands, good or bad. People should sing in what they're comfortable with, and there shouldn't be this unspoken rule, like, "Oh, you can't sing punk in anything other than English. . ." because it's the language of punk or whatever. Because there are bands from all over, there are bands from Hungary, and Finland--

E--Hong Kong.

M--Thailand, Argentina. I mean, every country you could possibly imagine, any language you can sing in. And if you're sending your record to these other countries and people are supposed to buy them, you should at least make an effort to try and translate the lyrics.

E--It's communication. If punk's one thing it's communication with other people. That's why we trade records with other people all over the fucking world. We're not going to make millions of dollars, and I personally don't want to sign to a label. If there is one thing I wanna do it's learn from other people. . .I mean. . . excuses people use to say that they have to sing in English is that, "oh, English is the language that sounds good,", they wanna communicate with people well--that's what translations are for. I have heard bands from just about every country in every single language I can think of. I hear about French not sounding good for singing hardcore, but you can think of bands like (some French name I didn't catch), Scraps. . . and a zillion bands that sing in those languages and they sound fine. Spanish bands, Colombian bands, Venezuealan bands and so on. . .Always translate everything into every language you can, communicate as much as you can. If you need to use English, use English. . .try to learn other languages. Like when I learned English, it broke this wall down and I had this learning experience with all these bands I could understand, and because I speak Spanish I'm able to listen to all these bands from Latin America and other parts of the world in their language, and it expands my knowledge of what they're trying to do so much. And I wish I could speak more languages, and when bands translate their stuff and I get to read it's great.

M--And it's a symptom of the homogenization of punk rock. All the bands start sounding the same. There are bands from other countries, and if you listen to their records and look at thier packaging and look at how they present themselves, and they're just like American bands. You cannot tell the difference, like they want to be this interchangable punk rock product. People should try to be different, not that we're all that original sounding. . .Part of the appeal of bands from other places is that. . . they have either a totally different perspective or a slightly different perspective, whether it's the way they present themselves or their musical influences, and to have all these bands that are trying to be just like every other band no matter where they're from, it's like. . . why?

E--It gets boring. . . Yes?

Me--No argument here.

After this, we chatted some more, and Amanda got into a lenghty argument with Mike about the homogeneity of punk rock. I went with the band to Amanda's brother's apartment in the suburb of Manchester, and watched *The Breakfast Club* in its entirety for the first time ever. In the months since then, Mike, Amanda, and Steve (who was a stop-gap temp for the tour) left the band for various reasons. Esnieder is continuing with a new group of musicians. Write them at Discos Sanjuancito, 80-50 Baxter Ave., #125, Elmhurst NY, 11373. Thanks again, Red Thunder Posse.